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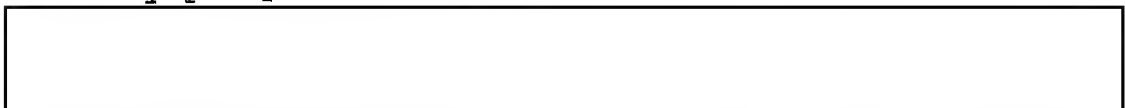
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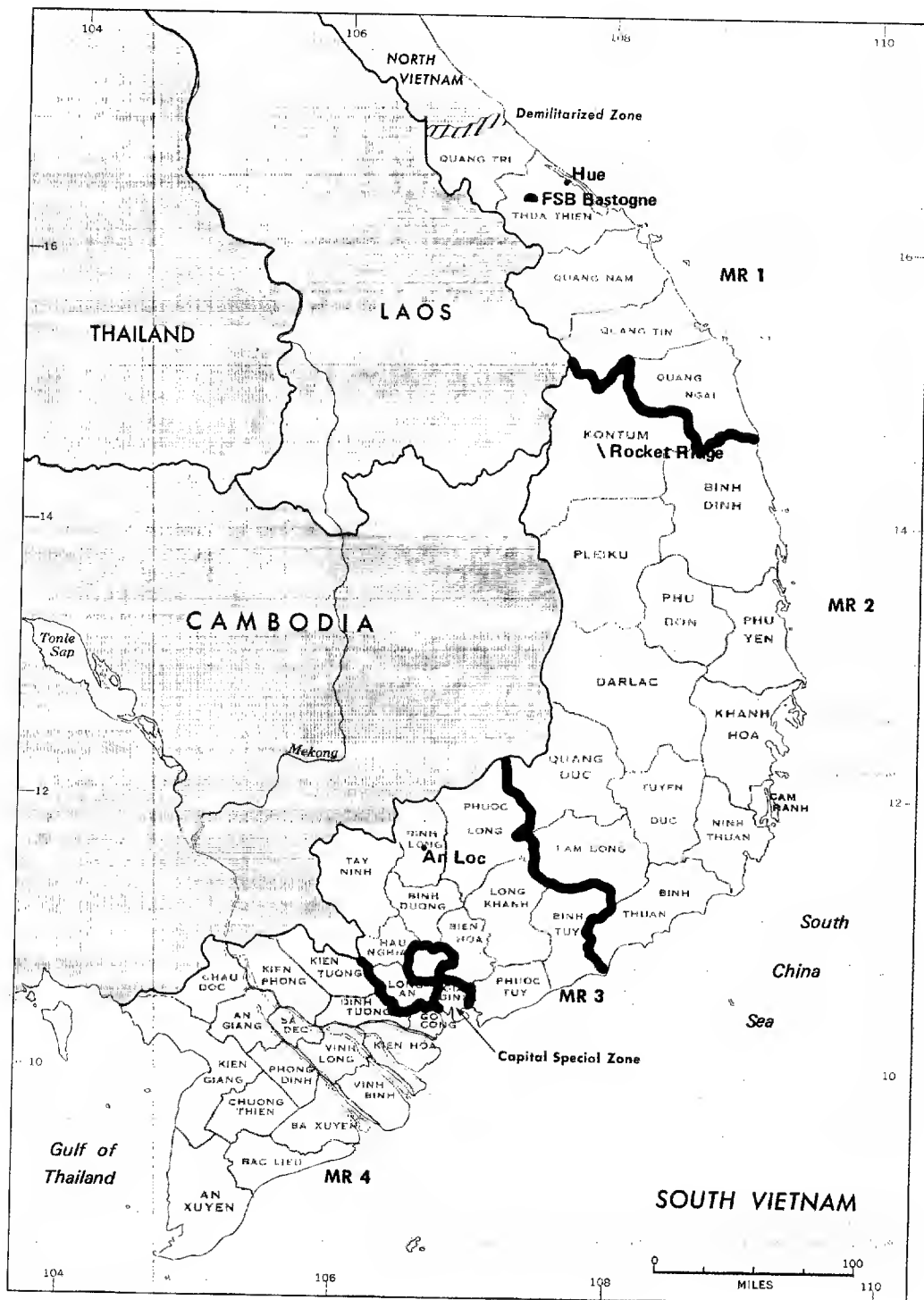
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VIETNAM: Communist military activity has been light in much of the country for several days, but there are signs that heavier fighting will get under way shortly in some areas.

In Quang Tri Province, Communist preparations for offensive action appear to be nearing completion. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] enemy tanks and artillery have been moved into forward positions, and some of the guns are targeted against the few remaining government positions in the province.

Communist forces in Thua Thien Province have maintained pressure on Fire Support Base Bastogne in the foothills west of Hue, but the enemy may be awaiting the arrival of tanks before launching a major attack into the coastal lowlands.

In Military Region (MR) 2, Communist activity has been light, but government forces throughout the military region have been put on alert in anticipation of widespread attacks, which South Vietnamese senior officers expect within the next two days. The situation in MRs 3 and 4 remains stable.

Enemy shore batteries and gunboats are aggressively challenging US ships in the waters off North Vietnam. In one recent incident, North Vietnamese gunfire hit the US destroyer Buchanan while it was operating off the coast near Vinh. The destroyer was extensively damaged and suffered a number of casualties. Communist gunners also fired several rockets at another US destroyer in this area but did not hit it. On 17 April, a North Vietnamese motor torpedo boat was sunk by a US destroyer on patrol south of Vinh. The destroyer had earlier chased an enemy gunboat in this area but lost contact. Farther north, two vessels, presumably North Vietnamese gunboats, attacked the guided missile frigate USS Worden east of Thanh Hoa and inflicted considerable damage to the frigate's superstructure. One US seaman was killed and eight others were wounded. The gunboats apparently escaped. [REDACTED]

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INDIA-PAKISTAN: Prime Minister Gandhi has proposed to President Bhutto that preparatory talks, looking toward a summit in early May, begin in Islamabad on 25 April.

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[redacted] Mrs. Gandhi has named the head of the Policy Planning Commission, D. P. Dhar, to lead the Indian team. Dhar is currently in Dacca consulting the Bangladesh Government. The Pakistani negotiators probably will be announced shortly. President Bhutto is receptive to talks and reportedly asked Mrs. Gandhi last week to set the time and place.

Government officials in New Delhi have expressed optimism about the prospects for a successful meeting, and the Indians may now be prepared to settle for some kind of tacit, rather than explicit, agreement by Bhutto to accept the status quo in Kashmir.

Bhutto's domestic position has been strengthened by the National Assembly's recent approval of his interim constitution. Recognition of Bangladesh would probably give him little trouble domestically and, in his strengthened position, he now may even be able to move closer to acquiescing in making the 1947 cease-fire line in Kashmir [redacted]

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EAST GERMANY - WEST GERMANY: The prospects for a general traffic treaty this month should become more apparent after the meeting today between negotiators Bahr and Kohl.

In talks last week, the East Germans agreed to resolve virtually all remaining technical matters and moved closer to the West German position on some contentious political language. That session was the first since East German party chief Hon-ecker's discussions with Brezhnev in Moscow, and Kohl's forthcoming posture clearly was agreed to during the Soviet - East German consultations.

While the Soviets have gone far in recent weeks to reduce East German intransigence, they have not asked Pankow to sacrifice its basic interests. Kohl has rejected adamantly Bonn's insistence that the treaty govern traffic between East Germany and West Berlin, an arrangement that would nullify Pankow's insistence on maintaining a distinction between West Berlin and the Federal Republic.

Bonn, nevertheless, has continued to argue that inclusion of West Berlin is the key remaining issue and has served notice that time is running out. Bahr repeated to Kohl last week that Bonn is not interested in the traffic compact unless it opens the way for improved inter-German travel and for subsequent negotiations on an over-all treaty defining the relationship between the two Germanies.

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USSR-TURKEY: Soviet President Podgorny's one-week visit to Turkey marked no change in the "correct" relations that exist between the two states.

The communiqué issued on 17 April, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] followed the pattern of previous Soviet-Turkish documents in being cool and businesslike. In addition, Moscow and Ankara issued a "declaration of principles on good-neighborly relations" which is modeled after the UN Charter. The Soviets reportedly were seeking a stronger document, such as a treaty of friendship or a protocol on consultations. Ankara, however, would agree only to continue "personal contacts between leaders," and not to regular or periodic contacts.

One of the "principles" refers to preventing the "use of their territories for aggression and subversive activities directed against other states." The Soviets may have had in mind US military activities in Turkey, while the Turks presumably were thinking of clandestine broadcasts aimed at Turkish audiences.

Although the Soviet military was represented on Podgorny's delegation, there apparently was no discussion of purely military topics. The Soviets have tried to get Ankara to accept an exchange of naval visits, but the Turkish Government has refused. A Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman remarked last year, however, that he was unwilling to predict that Ankara would continue to refuse for more than another year or so.

During his visit, Podgorny reaffirmed the Soviet position on Cyprus, which recognizes the separate status of the Turkish community on the island and opposes "enosis" in any form. The Soviets, however, refused Ankara's request to refer to the 1960 London-Zurich accords, the basis for Turkey's right to intervene on Cyprus. The desire to attract Soviet support on the Cyprus question has stimulated, in part, Ankara's improved relations with the USSR.

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SYRIA-USSR: Damascus reportedly is still wary of a friendship treaty with Moscow, but continuing Soviet and domestic pressure for such a pact seems likely to overcome Syrian reluctance.

According to a Syrian Foreign Ministry official, his government is opposed in principle to a treaty, but he claims that the position of those who favor such an arrangement has been strengthened by the recent Iraq-USSR agreement. The government, according to the Syrian official, would prefer to remain non-aligned and is highly critical of the Iraqi treaty, believing that Baghdad's action has allowed further erosion of "Arab independence."

These statements were made to the Italian diplomat who represents US interests in Syria. They may have been intended as a signal to the US and the West that if such a pact is signed, it should not be viewed as a Syrian move further into the Soviet camp. Damascus is strongly dependent on the USSR for military and economic aid and new offers of assistance would be likely to overcome any real Syrian reluctance about a more formal tie with Moscow.

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UN-LEBANON-ISRAEL: An increase in the number of UN observers on the Lebanese side of the border with Israel now appears virtually assured.

During consideration of Lebanon's request that the present seven-man contingent of the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) be augmented, the Soviets and the French wanted to use the consensus statement authorizing the increase to further their view that the Security Council should have full control over peacekeeping operations, with no latitude accorded the secretary-general. The Israelis, on the other hand, have opposed both an increase and any reference in the consensus statement to the armistice agreement of 1949, which they maintain has been null and void since the 1967 war. Secretary-General Waldheim declined to act on the Lebanese request on his own authority despite US and UK urgings that he do so.

The permanent members of the Security Council on Monday achieved ad referendum agreement on the consensus statement, and it almost certainly will be accepted soon by those governments and the ten nonpermanent members of the Council. The text is a noncontentious compromise on the issue of control of UN peacekeeping operations that makes no explicit reference to the 1949 armistice agreement, which is cited only in an annexed document. The Chinese went along with the consensus procedure but plan to issue a separate statement, noting--both for Palestinian consumption and for the sake of their own legal position--that their acquiescence does not constitute approval of the 1949 agreement because they were not Security Council members at the time.

The UNTSO unit along the Israel-Lebanon border is expected to be tripled in strength to 21 observers located at three fixed posts, two of which are not close to the armistice demarcation line. The extra personnel initially would be drawn from UNTSO

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headquarters in Jerusalem and from the 15 observation posts along the Israeli-Syrian cease-fire line, which is shorter than the Israeli-Lebanese border. The UNTSO chief of staff officially has noted that only limited results can be expected, since even the augmented team could not verify most complaints of border incursions.

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GUINEA: A flurry of diplomatic activity and hints of changed emphasis at home mark Guinea's emergence from over one year of fixation on security.

Although the Toure government continues to view itself as a permanent target of "imperialist plotting," it at last appears ready once again to contend with foreign and domestic issues beyond mere survival. It has sought recently to improve relations with some neighboring governments and to recoup prestige lost during last year's massive political purge. The first step was Nigerian General Gowon's visit in early March, which resulted in warm praise for Toure and a needed psychological boost for his government. Important meetings in Conakry last week of a UN committee on colonial issues, and the expected visit of Fidel Castro will further allay Toure's fears of political isolation and enhance his claim to be a leader of Africa's "progressive governments."

Conakry seems also to be moving toward rapprochement with three neighboring states from which it has long been estranged. Statements this week by officials in Conakry and Accra point toward an early resumption of relations broken in 1966 when Ghana's deposed President Nkrumah--a political ally of Toure--was given refuge in Guinea. New mediation efforts by Liberia appear to be under way to reconcile Guinea's dispute with Senegal over the presence of anti-Toure exiles on its territory. Finally, the presence of an Ivory Coast delegation at a recent Guinean party meeting probably indicates interest on both sides in resuming a reconciliation begun in mid-1970, but interrupted by the purge.

Domestically, predictions of imminent "invasion" and new disclosures of foreign subversion, so evident in last year's propaganda, have given way to renewed emphasis on solving economic problems and bureaucratic inefficiency. Next week a National Congress of Guinea's only party is expected to highlight these issues.

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CANADA: Ottawa's over-all trade surplus for the first quarter of this year was lower than that for the same period of 1971, as imports rose 22 percent compared with a seven-percent growth in exports. The trade surplus with the US increased moderately to about \$325 million; exports rose 17 percent, while imports grew by 15 percent. This increase should diminish, however, as Canada's economic recovery stimulates the demand for imports from the US. [REDACTED]

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ZAIRE: The Catholic Church has capitulated to President Mobutu's demand that the party youth movement be allowed to establish committees in its major seminaries. The church tried to resist the order by closing its seminaries last month. For its part, the government reportedly has agreed that the committees will be composed only of seminarians and will have no jurisdiction over religious instruction. The crisis between Mobutu and the church seems to be resolved for the time being. The president's main critics are now in exile, the youth movement is in the seminaries, and the Zaire Catholic Church hierarchy has been subdued. [REDACTED]

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SEYCHELLES: The government has restored order after three days of rioting in the capital last week. Labor disturbances began when the Seychelles People's United Party called a general strike among its supporting unions to underscore its demands for a new constitution as a step toward independence for the British crown colony. Violence erupted during a workers' march to the office of Chief Minister James Mancham, whose ruling Seychelles Democratic Party favors continued ties with the UK. Although calm prevails, more demonstrations, possibly attended by violence, are likely. [REDACTED]

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